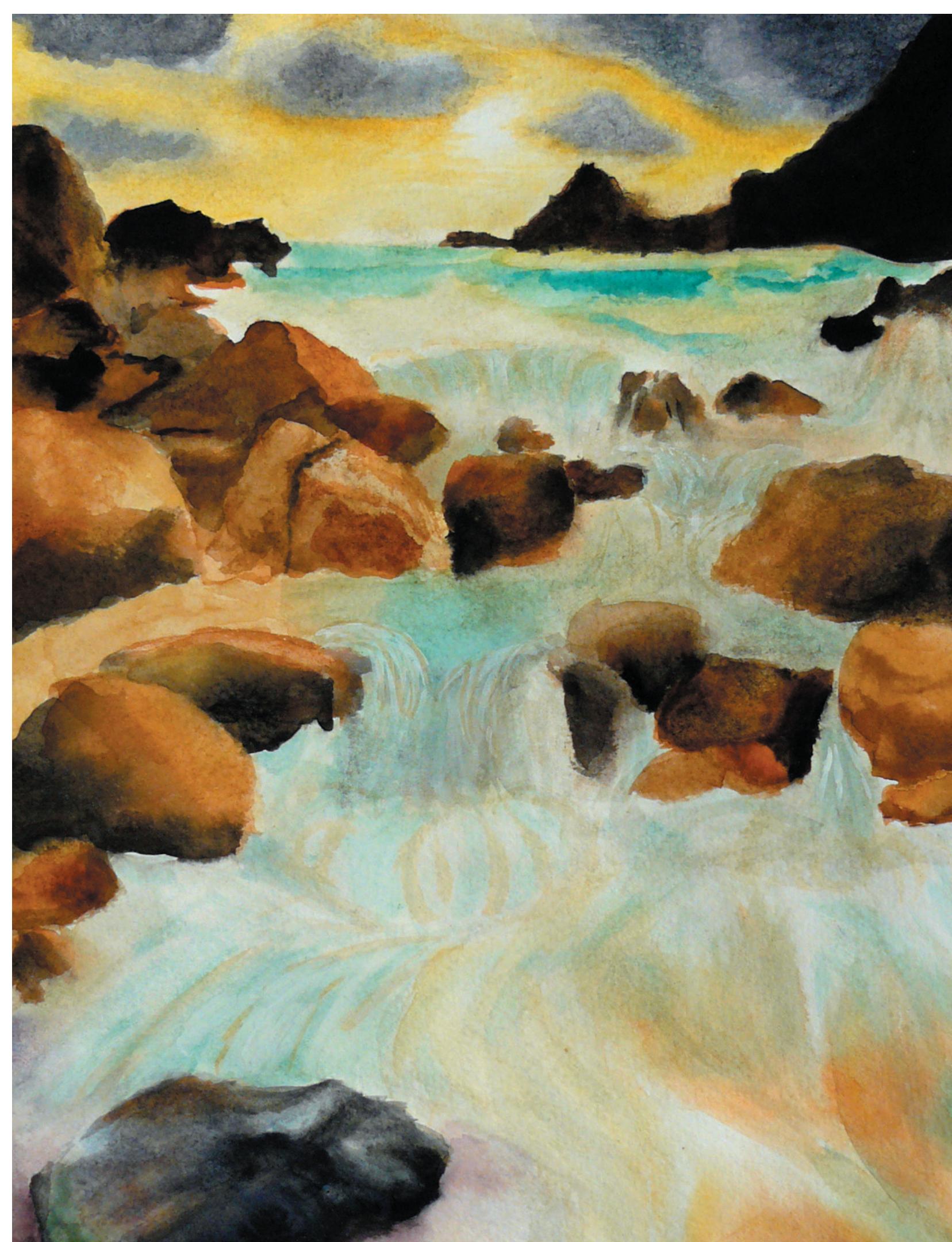


THE REGISTER

SPRING 2008

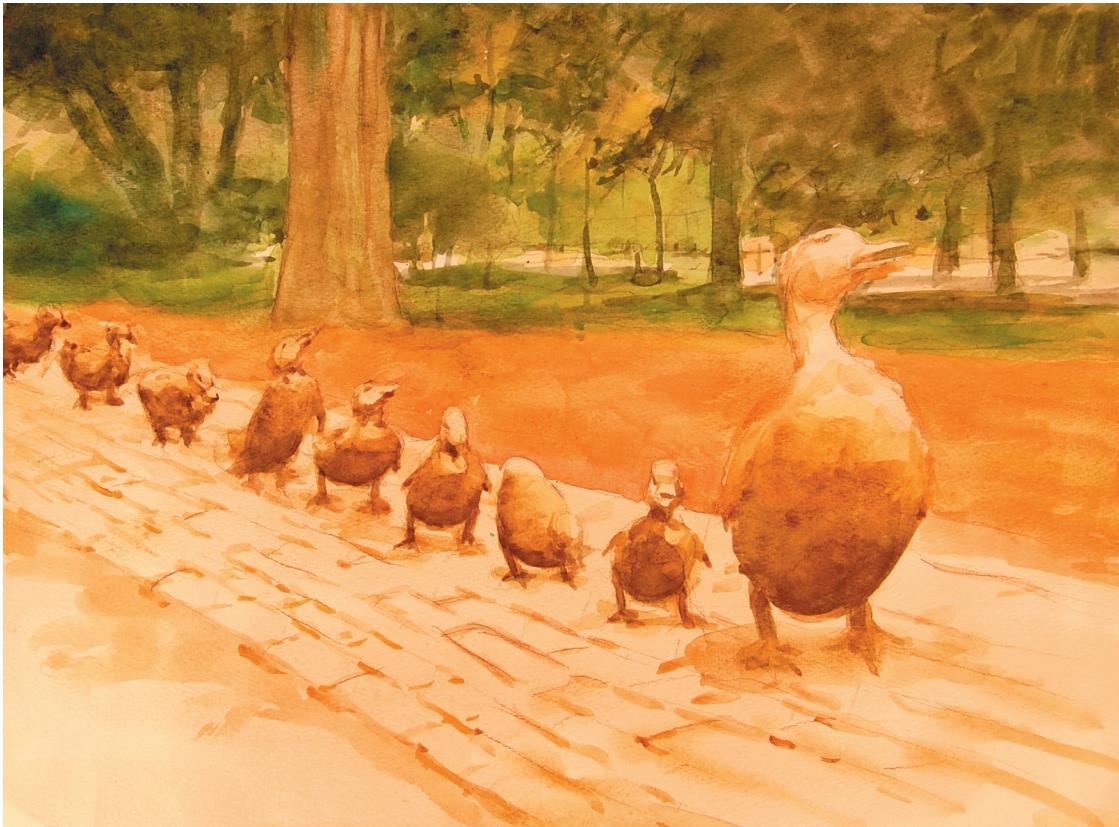




The Register

Spring 2008

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The Girl and Her Moon

Grandfather always had a good story to tell little Tayo as they sat under the mango tree to get away from the bright sun. Tayo would curl up on her grandfather's lap, listening to her stories about her mother when she was her age living in the garden. Tayo would close her eyes and imagine her mother's golden hair reflecting the sunlight the way hers did and the mango juice dripping down her chin. Tayo loved Grandfather's garden that was filled with fruit trees and plants from all over the world. She couldn't imagine how her mother could leave such a magical place.

Tayo loved to follow Grandfather around the garden all day long as he tended to his plants, and she would beg him to tell her story after story until the sun set, and it was time for her to sleep. Finally, Grandfather would stop giving in and tell her that she could hear another story when the sun rose. After he kissed her on the head and shut the door, Tayo would lay awake thinking about the big world where her mother was and wondering when her mother would come back to the garden. Every night, she would go to the window and look at the moon shining over the mango tree. Her moon was always there, and she loved it.

One day, Grandfather announced that he had found a great job in the city and that they would be moving. Tayo started to cry. Her grandfather took her on his lap and asked her why she was so sad.

She looked up at him and said, "I don't want to leave my moon."

Grandfather burst out in laughter and hugged her tightly. Tayo did not understand why he was laughing when she was so upset. He told her to wait for nightfall and that he would show her something magical. Tayo dragged herself around the garden all day long without saying a word, but when night came and her moon came into the sky, she started to cry again.

Her grandfather told her to get into the car and lean her head out of the window. "Look up at the moon," he said, and started to drive.

They drove past her uncle's house, past the town, and into the Jamaican mountains.

Finally, Tayo exclaimed, "Grandfather, look! My moon is following me!" Sure enough, the moon remained over the car as they drove from the country into the city.

When the time came for them to move, Tayo was ready. She said goodbye to her bedroom, to the garden and to her mango tree. The moon followed Tayo all the way to the city like Grandfather had promised, and it returned every night to greet her when she was lonely.

As Tayo grew, she learned to love the new house. It was much bigger and the garden had more trees. When she was not with her friends from school or lounging by the pool, she would hear her grandfather in the garden, and sometimes she would ask him to tell her a story about her mother. Every night, after she was done reading a book, she would go to her new window and gaze up at her moon. Tayo had changed a lot, but her moon was still as bright as it had always been. She would sit there for hours when she could not fall asleep. The moon helped her forget how old her grandfather was getting and how far away her mother was.

One day, Grandfather announced that her mother was ready for Tayo to come live in the States with her. Tayo started to cry. He told her that Boston was a wonderful place, full of buildings and gardens.

"But Grandfather," she cried, "I don't want to leave you!"

She could see her own sadness reflected in his eyes, but he smiled and hugged her tightly.

"Remember when you were a little girl, Tayo," he said, "you didn't want to leave because you didn't want to leave your moon."

Tayo nodded, remembering the magical drive through the countryside.

"I am your moon," he told her. "Whenever you look up at the sky and see your moon, remember that I am looking at it too and that I am thinking of you."

Tayo was not ready to leave when it came time for her to join her mother. At the airport, she held on to Grandfather tightly with no intention of letting go. The Caribbean sun beat down on them as the two of them stood there on the runway. Finally, she said goodbye, and walked up the steps to the plane. She imagines her mother thousands of miles away waiting for her at the gate at Logan Airport. It would be nighttime when she finally arrived. The moon would be illuminating the sky.

Hidden vs. Concealed

You don't fear what I hide, you fear what's inside

Who you testing? My lethal weapon, ain't a Smith 'n' Wesson
My fists ain't 'sh', compared to this, on target never miss
As you packing heat, I'm contagiously spreading peace
Not a rental or a lease, spitting knowledge for free
Simply made him follow by breaking Aristotle with a bottle
Strapped with experience 'cause the only thing not promised is tomorrow

You don't fear what I hide, you fear what's inside

The intelligence behind the poet, behind the rapper
Doesn't seem to frighten your character, but I got a deadly weapon that can scare you faster

You don't fear what I hide, you fear what's inside

I am the reason hip-hop will remain alive
My evidence is always tight and never sloppy, want to copy? Hit up Copley
Dropping knowledge to abolish ignorance against violence.
Going against Rambo, he empties the clip but my mind never runs out of ammo

You don't fear what I hide, you fear what's inside

You sink, while my career is on a constant *slope*
And that's why I shall *rise over RUN*, DMC, Jam Master Jay
Most definitely, Talib Kweli, the future is me!

You don't fear what I hide, you fear what's inside

There's no such thing as a variant thought, always authentic
Don't try to be someone you're not, because in the future you will repent it
Soulja Boy, I told-ya boy, everyone would notice you're just a boy
White shades and jewelry disguise the fact you have yet to hit puberty
I caress the touchy subject, and if you object
I'll make sure a cure for your disease won't be released

You don't fear what I hide, you fear what's inside

Because my mind is a weapon that can't be defined

- Joshua Mejia, II

SHAKESPEAREAN SOLILOQUY

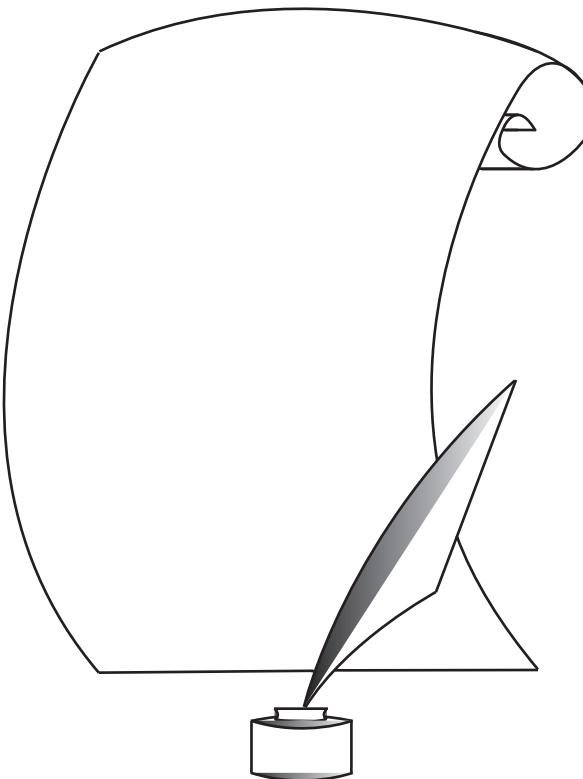
If Shakespeare wrote the act of this reality
Call me The Fool
Jester of the times
Babbling Brook in the flesh—
I feed thee my lines:

Not all that glitters be gold
And not all that's gold shall glitter
When dug deep in mines and rivers
Dug up by Africa's young brothers
Sold cheap to snakes that slither
Wipe down the blood—it's cleaner
Now guilt is vanished completely
From sellers' consumers' demeanor.

Love is blind in all of its senses
When it's forbidden between caresses
Results all positive in testing
Numbing the physical affections
Red ribbons awarded as blessings
The remedy still keeps us guessing
Yet they still refuse protection
Even with these vile infections
Thriving in third world dimensions.

Lo, toss they bombs over Baghdad
Till deserts and rubble, all's drab
Fly thy flag and go mad
Point fingers, lift noses at unknown man
From six feet under trumpets sound flat
Click heels, load barrels—salute
Too ignorant, governed by brute.

Riddle me this and riddle me those
Curtains fall and scene comes to close
Lift they head; wipe thine eyes and they drool
Exeunt, exeunt goes The Fool.



-Ashley Miranda, Class I



H

E

Untitled

As I sit in the somber church next to my weeping classmates, my mind drifts back to a sunny day in June when I got my final paper back. Ms. Filipi stood at the front of the history class lecturing against the evils of plagiarism, but I quickly flipped to the last page.

Dominique, this is an excellent paper. You should be really proud. I have enjoyed having you as a student for the last two years. - Ms. F

An excellent paper; the word brought a smile to my face when I thought of the time I spent researching in the library and writing. We all complained when she assigned such a large paper so near to the end of the year, but instead of resorting to the infamous Wikipedia, I realized that after all I had experienced in her class, I owed it to her to write a great paper.

On the first day of school that year when I saw Ms. Filipi, the most difficult teacher I had ever had, who was on my schedule for the second time, I was shocked. The cancer had gotten worse during the previous year and we were all sure that she would not be returning to teach. But, there she was when I entered her classroom: Smiling, radiant, red hair, and a perfectly matching outfit. She looked more alive than ever, and she remained this way throughout the year. She assigned loads of homework and gave us challenging tests, making us question how someone who wasn't in perfect health could possibly do so much grading.

Through a smile, that December, she told us that her cancer was back. She wasn't scared anymore, she said, because she knew that she would fight it as best as she could. Her strength could have convinced anyone, especially me.

As the students in my class fought to ace a test, keep their friends, or make it on the soccer team, Ms. Filipi was fighting alongside us, but through a much greater battle. I always wondered what supernatural strength could bring her back to our school's demanding environment after defeating melanoma twice. I had been upset about getting her as a teacher again after barely surviving my first year, but like cancer, once you beat something, it does not mean that you will not encounter the problem again. Instead, you have to bring what you have learned and more in order to face the challenge when it returns. I had to put my most eager foot forward and strive for excellence instead of being afraid of what lay ahead.

As I struggle to always do my best, life at Boston Latin School keeps me so busy that it is easy to forget those whom I have met along the fast-paced journey. But, on those days when the hallways bring me past room 028, I stop, and remember the strong, smiling woman who came back, and taught me a lot more than just history.

- Dominique Tayo Hall, I





Spring 2008

Zella Lets Her Hair Down

A Fairytale That Didn't Cut It

“Zella!”

“I’m sorry, but I just can’t take this dratted thing any longer!”

Sixteen years old, she stood in the middle of the round floor on the roof of the tower. Her scissors and her eyes flashed brightly. Wrapped around the delicate white fingers, now clamped into a fist, was a silken rope of red-gold hair.

“I’ve got to do it!” she called, a desperate lilt to her voice, “It’s getting ridiculous. How could he possibly think that I’d, that I’d...!”

“Zella. For once, could you simply play the damsel? It’s how things are supposed to work. That’s what princes are for.”

“Well, I guess they just aren’t for me!” And on that note, she clasped the blades of the scissors around her braid, and in one clean snip, the golden snake coiled to the ground, limp and lifeless.

The rest of the room was far from lifeless. Zella beamed with a fiery triumph and joy, and her companion turned the color of a moldy eggplant—purple and blotchy-white.

“What, in the name of Grimm, did you just do?” shrieked the old lady. Her pointed hat was askew; her long black dress practically billowed with rage. “I grew that blasted rampion, I built this wretched tower, I changed diapers, cooked meals, and climbed a ladder made of hair! Yet you, YOU, had the audacity to do something on your own! Maidens never do anything on their own! He was supposed to rescue you! Ride off together while I seethed and bubbled with rage!” Here the old lady stopped for breath. Her face drooped and turned the color of a candied apple. “I wanted to have a story,” she said dejectedly.



Meanwhile, a two-hour horseback ride away, a young man strutted through the forest. He was dashingly handsome, with dark hair, blue eyes, and strong build. He knew he looked good. At this time, he was thinking (which was rare for him). He was thinking about the daring stunt he was about to do. Everything culminated with this. All that energy, all that climbing, all that thinking was finally going to pay off. Not only was he about to run off with the most beautiful person in the world (except for himself), he was going to be immortalized forever. He was going to become a fairytale in his own time. He was going to...



Zella was by now alone in the tower. The witch had stormed out in a pitiable mixture of anguish and fury that left the girl sad at heart.

“But what choice did I have?” she thought dejectedly. She really had none. Well, she could have let the prince set her free in the dead of the night like he had been so eager to do, let him climb up that blasted hair yet again (which actually hurt rather badly—he was not a small man), let the witch play the villainess she had been rehearsing to play, and then ridden off into... the sunset? No, that was scientifically impossible. Happily ever after? Well, that’s what they were all hoping for, that silly boy, the stupid hag. But the problem was no one waited for her. They did not care what she did afterwards, so long as the during made the perfect story. Zella sighed. This had all been so wrong from the start. Curse her parents for signing that stupid contract! Curse that witch for watching all those ridiculous “Far Far Away’s Next Top Villain” shows at the castle! Curse that idiotic, sophomoric, rock-headed, imbecile, knuckle-dragging, self-centered prince!

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Zella hurried down the steep stone staircase that spiraled throughout the tower. She always wondered why everyone preferred using her hair to using the steps. Rucksack in hand and sporting a brand new pixie haircut, Zella hurried across the field and onto her destiny.



It was time, Steve decided. Now, now he would do it. For Zella! For history! By Grimm, he was actually going to rescue a beautiful maiden from a horrible witch! He was doing it! He was doing it!? What was he doing!?



Anxiously, the witch paced the tower floor. She had returned to try again, to talk some sense into the girl, only to find her gone. Glancing out the window, her blood ran cold. The prince was riding up the path. Tonight! Why couldn't he have picked last Tuesday? Why couldn't he have picked last night! Nevertheless, here he was. And here was she without any maiden to speak of. This would call for improvisation. She had never been very good at casting spells, but if there was ever a time for trying, it was then. Out of the closet the witch dragged a large, black cauldron and kindled a fire beneath it. She needed a spell for youth, but her book was in her other robes! Throwing caution to the winds, the witch decided to wing it.

"Eye of liver, ear of tongue," she chanted, throwing in whatever she could find in the room (in this case two socks and a library card),

"Stick of spleen and song that's sung," (three marbles and a hair elastic),

"In this now, my hour of need," (a tube of lipstick and the fateful scissors),

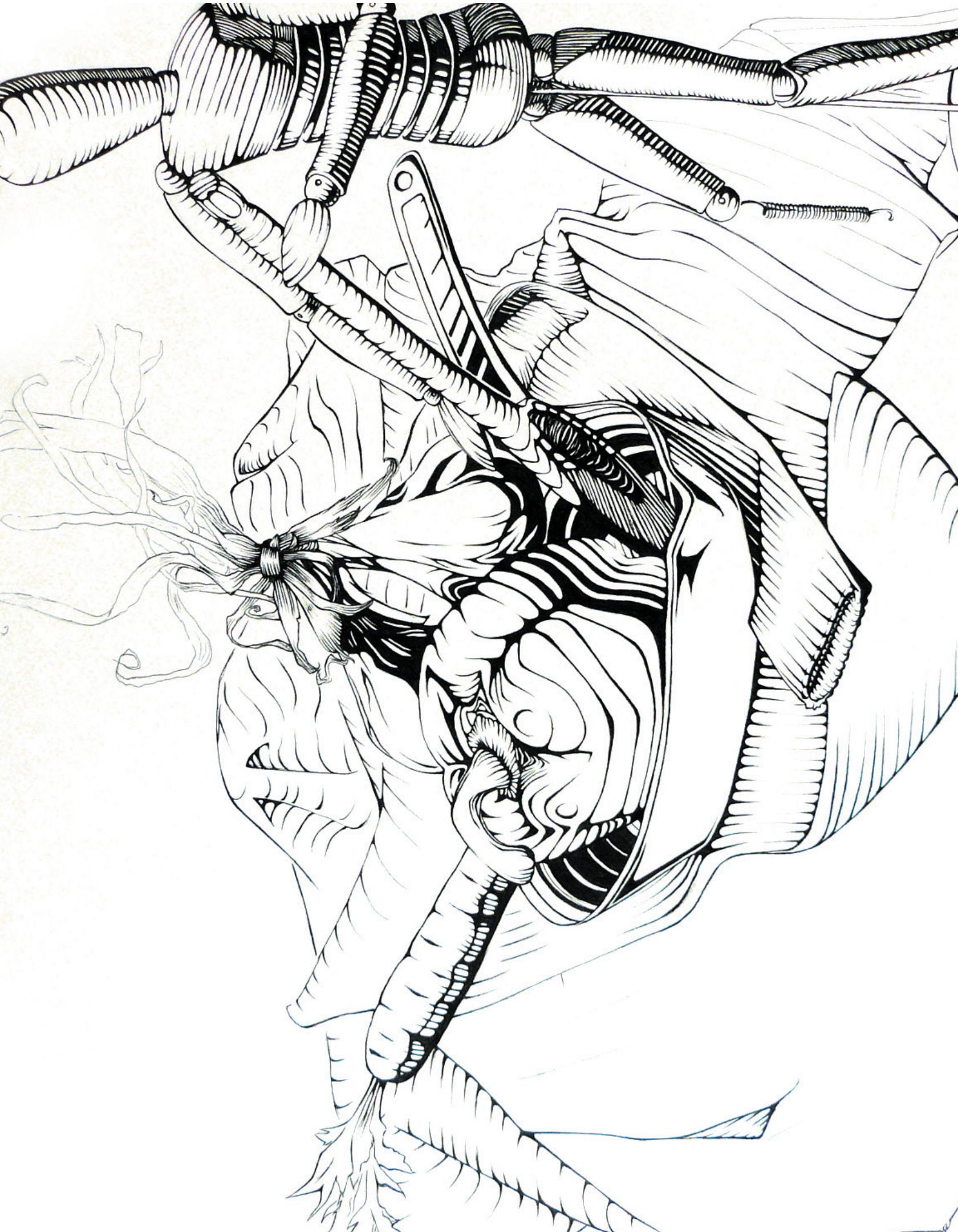
"Make me younger, fill my greed!" She finished her chant and dropped in the long, limp ponytail of Zella and a bottle of her age-defying moisturizer for good measure.

1...2...3...

The cauldron exploded. It drenched the witch from head to toe with her brew and hit Steve (who had, after giving up on calling when no one had answered, begun to scale the wall of the tower itself) directly in his eyes. Steve, blinded, fell off the wall, but thankfully avoided a hard landing by falling on top of the beautiful rose bushes at the bottom of the tower. The witch, however, had fared far worse. The anti-aging cream was quite powerful indeed. In the center of the tower, surrounded by shrapnel from the exploded cauldron, sat a wailing baby girl.

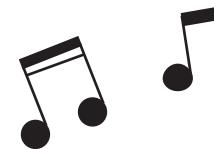
- Emily Mayer, Class II







SOUND



Sitting down on the steps in front of his home, I took out the present I had saved up for and so precariously wrapped, writing but two bold words in the best handwriting I could manage at the time, with the trembling hand I had:

To Schuyler

Swallowing my nervousness (and my gum), I placed the thick-tipped marker in my pocket and walked up the step, taking some comfort in the way that rubber soles of my sneakers struck against the stone of which they were comprised. It took nearly all the courage I had to raise my hand, now free of the gift, to knock on the door; I stood there for a few seconds, shrugging the case a little higher up onto my shoulder. My hands were trembling a bit. The door opened before I could figure out exactly what to say, and then in front of me there stood Schuyler-Rae Obern. My violin teacher. In all his glory. I could hear music from inside his house as he looked up from the hand he'd used to open the door. "Oh," he said in a soft voice.

"God, I think I'd kill myself if I could go to Heaven where that was all I heard."

He smiled at me. "Hello there, *Liebling*." It was amazing that he still called me that. It was his pet name of sorts for me, ever since I was a girl of five. I would always blush and stay quiet whenever I heard my sixteen-year-old knowledge—but I was always timid, I suppose. At least, when I was around him. "What brings you here?"

I couldn't help but smile back. I was hopeless. Doomed. Done for. Was there any other way to put it? "Hi Schuyler. Um... Do you... do you mind if I come in for a little while? Just for a bit, and then I'll be out of your hair."

He opened the door a little more. "Come in, Charlie, come in." I noticed him looking rather curiously at both my bag and the violin case. The case I never referred to as mine. It was always my godfather's. Even after death, even after the whole inheritance process, it was his. Always. My own fine-tuners (at least for three of the strings, and my

godfather always affectionately urged me to take them off), but still... it was his violin.

I looked up at him. "Well... I have a couple of things to say. One, I really, really appreciate everything you've done to teach me how to play this." I glanced backward, looking at the violin case affectionately. "So... I was wondering if I could play a piece for you." With his blessing, I slowly placed the bag beside me, taking the bow, shoulder rest, and violin out of the case. Out of another pocket I took a folder where I kept all of my sheet music. With a soft smile, I remembered everything he'd told me, everything since the very beginning.

I picked up the violin and the shoulder rest, fitting the latter onto the former.

"It's supposed to fit very snugly, like so..."

I placed my chin on the black rest.

"Rest your violin like this, so that the black part, the chin rest, is right at your neck..."

I picked up the bow.

"Your little finger has to rest on the tip of the bow."

I played an E; A; D; G. All of them forte. I tuned them until they sounded right. By this time I didn't have to hum, the way he had taught me when I was just learning.

"Stronger... Even louder, my dear... You just played forte, a forte E."

I played a forte E again.

"You take the peg and gently move it... listening carefully for the sound... You have smaller pegs on the bottom, fine tuners... you only have one now. We might have to find some new ones for you though, Liebling, because you're new to this."

I wasn't new to it anymore.

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Satisfied with the sound, I picked up the folder and walked over to the nearby music stand, placing the sheet music on it, spreading it out so that I could see it all. And then, after he'd gone and turned down his music a little, I engulfed my teacher in the musical lake.

Mezzo piano... that was the most of the piece. I took pleasure in playing forte when I had to play forte, mezzo forte when I had to play mezzo forte.

I passed by the trill that always gave me a hard time with literally no difficulty at all. Then came the finish, abrupt by no means. A simple, peaceful decrescendo. Forte. Mezzo piano. Piano. And then the piece stopped, the lake disappeared, and I walked over and little by little turned up the stereo. There would be sound in this house, by God. Constant, never-ending, ceaseless sound.

I looked to my teacher for approval. He was smiling, hands coming together in a clapping sound. "That was beautiful, Charlie, wonderful," he said. "What is it called?" He tilted his head to the side a bit. "Did he compose that? Your godfather..."

I shook my head, embarrassed by the source. "It's from a video game," I mumbled. "I don't play it... the video game, I mean. Lukas does when he has the time. I just listen to the music. I like it... and one of the pieces was adapted to the violin, so... I thought I'd learn how to play it. And then the other thing..." I gestured toward the bag. "That's for you, too. I saved up."

Curious, he set his eyes on the bag, watching it until I brought it over to him, pulling the wrapped box out of the bag and handing it to him. I figured he'd like the sound of ripping paper. "What's this?" he asked me.

I smiled. Adults were so technologically inept sometimes... especially when it came to my other godfather... Uncle Marcus, as I affectionately called him. But he could be forgiven. He couldn't really be blamed for reasons beyond our control. "This is an MP3 player, Schuyler. Here, I

can show you how it works... Do you have a spare CD on hand? Not a blank one. One that's actually got music on it."

As he got up to obtain one, I opened the box and took out the cold metal and plastic device. One half of the wire that came with it was to be plugged into the bottom. The other was for his computer. "Here... Now we go over to the computer, plug this part in... Could I have the CD, please?" He handed it to me.

"Thank you. Now you can transfer the files on the CD over to the MP3 player, like this." I showed him, dragging the files to the window that represented the device. Saving him with multiple tiny clicks of the mouse. I smiled a little apologetically, not tearing my eyes away from the screen as I worked. "Truth be told, it was pretty expensive. But I put the money toward a good cause, I would say."

"And what cause is that, my dear?"

I turned away from the computer, hoping that the whirring sound from the hard drive would soothe him. "Now you can have sound all the time. If things are too silent, just go get this, turn it on, and listen. All the songs you like will be at your command. And you can even make it click while you're browsing the songs that you have on it."

He took up the device in his hands, stroking it with his thumb. He was smiling at it, like it was his savior. He looked over to me and smiled a little wider, leaning over and kissing the top of my head like he had done during my very first lesson.

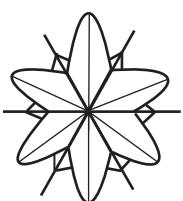
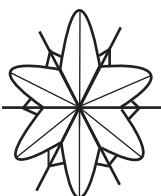
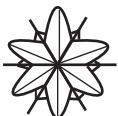
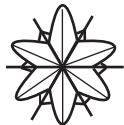
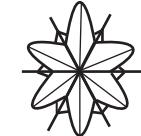
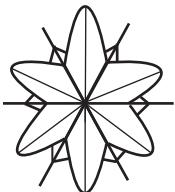
"Du bist liebe, Charlotte," he said.

You are sweet.

- Sahar Hakim, II



Spring Snow Flurries



It's raining petals down over my head.
Small white flowers drift in the wind,
A new type of white flurry, made especially for spring
They twist in the air and catch in my hair
And hang around the allergy prone

Green bursts and small buds appear overnight
Life seems to have woken up
Every breeze brings a new smell
And there are more people out than there has been
In what seems like years

The magnolia tree is blooming
Flowers open and petals fall to the ground
Rotting and releasing their own sweet scent
In spring, even the rot seems to be full
Of life.

- Hannah Rigg, II

Torture Throughout the Ages

When I was a kid, my life goal was to be like my older sister. This is kind of ironic, because growing up, her life goal was to keep me at least 13.75 feet away from her at all times. This is why it came as a beautiful surprise to me on those rare occasions when she would decide to tolerate me long enough that I could entertain her. The time that I remember most vividly, and the one that will probably cost me thousands of dollars in therapy later on in life, is when Anna and her friend Leah enlisted me to join in their game of “kidnapper.”

I’m sure my excitement spilled from every pore and my gap-toothed smile stretched across my face as they tied the red bandana over my expectant eyes. My sister lifted me up with some difficulty and shuffled in her sock-feet down the long hall to my parents’ bedroom. She awkwardly lugged me into their huge walk-in closet and dumped me in the wicker laundry hamper. As the two girls giggled, they shoved the lid over my head and proceeded to secure their entrapment by stacking on top large encyclopedia volumes they had carted upstairs in preparation.

The girls pulled the long, scraggly string to turn off the light, shut the door with a click, and went off to find some other game to play. I felt like a sailor huddled in a sunk submarine, waiting for the oxygen to run out. I began to scream, afraid that I would die in that laundry hamper. It took me some time to get out, but I finally did. Of course, I immediately found my sister and slammed her hand in a door, sending my whole family to the emergency room for the night.

Sometimes, as I clearly felt, it seems like the only way to get even with a sibling is through physical violence. Thirty years before, my father, also the youngest child, had felt similarly. As his family sat around the table, a large pot roast in front of them, voices buzzed. His oldest brother, the mature one, sat quietly observing the scene. My father and the middle son, Jim, were passionately arguing about something, but their parents took no notice of the usual bickering as they discussed Adlai Stevenson and Dwight Eisenhower. The volume level slowly rose as the two boys became angrier and angrier and pre-pubescent obscenities flew across the table.

Suddenly, in a stroke of genius, my father grabbed his soup spoon and whipped it across the table at his older brother. The room went silent in that instant, and each family member’s head turned in unison to the end of the table where Jim sat, a spoon sticking straight out from his forehead. My grandmother looked from one end of the table, where her small son sat wide-eyed and shocked at his own great feat, to the other, where a spoon balanced, lodged in Jim’s head. Whether this moment was a victory or an outrage depends on whom you ask, but it certainly made an impression because it is retold every time we bring out the soup at Thanksgiving dinner.

As siblings grow older, they continue to fight, but the reasons for argument change--and hopefully they don’t throw things at each other anymore. In the case of my sister and I, as we “matured,” we began to argue over who was spending too much time getting ready in the bathroom. On the other hand, my grandmother’s family didn’t even have a bathroom while she was growing up. Any time their baked beans and brown bread caught up with them, they would have to trek out back and make the long journey to the rickety, splintery outhouse.

There are many obvious problems with the whole outhouse system, including awful smells, creepy bugs, and frigid winter days. However, the one you might have overlooked is cruel little brothers. My grandmother had a lot of experience with this issue, but she never saw it coming as she sat in that unpleasant little cubicle one hot summer day. Her pesky little brother had grown bored playing marbles and crept up on tiptoe behind the foul shack. He spread his feet and bent his knees in preparation, and heaved with all his might on the side of the outhouse. Not surprisingly, the wobbly little building was easier to topple than he had anticipated, and my grandmother quickly went rolling down the hill. The outcome of this event is pretty predictable, involving my reeking grandmother chasing her brother for miles down the dirt road.

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At this point I'd throw a fit if I were forced to use an outhouse, and I don't even know who Adlai Stevenson was, but that doesn't mean I can't relate to my older relatives. We have all at times been the victim, and at other times the perpetrator, of extreme sibling cruelty. If you look at movies and pictures, it seems that people change so much over the years; however, if instead you look at how they interact with each other, it becomes clear that they haven't changed that much at all. No matter how much time goes by, fashions change, and new instruments of torture are invented, children will always be using those instruments on their siblings. The strategies may change, but the intention always remains the same: to cause a much discomfort and humiliation for the sibling as humanly possible. It just seems to me that whether you end up stuck in a wicker laundry basket from Bed, Bath and Beyond, or simply sitting in a pile of crap in a corn field, it's always your sibling's fault, and your siblings are always out to get you.

- Molly Goodkind, I





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LITTLE BY LITTLE

Petite à Petite

A gentle breeze blows into a little room
A long scarf
Frayed at the edges
Lay precariously on a desk

A desk covered with half-written work
pages of a textbook
Flutter in the wind

The wind is sweet and fresh
Sweet and fresh as the memories
From the moments of yesterday

Summer rain is falling
Washing away the dirt,
the mistakes, the hate, the things that
We can't bear to see anymore

A gentle breeze blows into a little room

Little by little, we leave behind
the mistakes, the hate, the things that
We can't bear to see anymore
We sweep away the memories of yesterday
Like summer rain falling
on the broken ground (full of regret)

*La douce brise soufflée dans une petite chambre
La longe écharpe
S'a effilé à les bords
Il a couche précaire dans le bureau*

*Le bureau avec demi fini devoirs
les pages de le manuel
Battement dans le vent*

*Le vent est sucre et frais
Sucre et frais autant que les mémoires
De les temps de hier*

*La pluie d'été est à tomber
À laver au loin la saleté
ses tromper de, le haine, les choses que
Nous ne pouvons pas plus de voir*

La douce brise soufflée dans une petite chambre

*Petite à petite, nous sortions derrière
ses tromper de, le haine, les choses que
Nous ne pouvons pas plus de voir
Nous balaiions les memoires de heir
Comme la pluie d'été a tomber
dans le brisée terre (plein de regret)*

- Lisa Wang, III

Plank Walk: High School for the College Bound

Once upon a time there was a smooth, richly red velvet. The velvet covered a rope, the rope formed a line and the line directed young men and women like cattle towards a docked ship. Hundreds of them stood there, shirts pressed, nails trimmed, hair impeccably smooth, eager to join the horde of people rushing towards the ship.

Mothers remained with their children at the entrance. They said their teary goodbyes at the arched gate and lingered, remaining there long after they lost sight of their own children in the crowd. They were apprehensive of their newfound freedom: lost and unsure of how to live for themselves for the first time in eighteen years.

The closer to the ship they got, the more anxious the members of the crowd became. People in the back pushed forward, and eventually the line turned into an overflowing funnel--everyone trying to cram onto a footbridge only wide enough for a single person. Slowly at first, and then more rapidly, like a body succumbing to a terminal disease, the crowd became a mob. Shouting. Violent shoving. The muffled protests of someone trampled underfoot.

When the pressure from the back became too much, people began falling off the edge of the dock--one by one into the water between ship and land. For those, and for those who fell under the feet of their peers, the journey ended before it ever had a chance to begin.

A girl was in the middle of the crowd. Stagnant in a sea of people. She watched the madness around her like it was in slow motion, and despite her efforts to remain still, the crowd began to sweep her along like a great river whose current was too strong to resist. Even though she was moving towards it, it was not the ship that captivated her. She was looking beyond the ship, out across the vast ocean where she knew her destination was lurking out of sight. And so it was with thoughts of that far-away place that she reached the front of the line.

Ushered aboard, she had even less control than when she was in the crowd. Hands reached out and pulled her along and it was too chaotic not to trust them. When she reached the far side of the deck, the groping hands released her, and it was only then that she was able to take in her surroundings. The ship was far bigger than she expected. Standing on the deck, the mast seemed to stretch forever upward. She longed to climb it, to sit inside the crow's nest and look out into the fading horizon. But she was stuck hundreds of feet below with a hindered perspective.

A voice called her away from her gaze.

"Hey," she looked down into the mass of people, uncertain. A man standing directly in front of her, a few feet away, waved his hands impatiently. "He's talking to you." She followed the direction of his now pointing finger. Startled, she took in the ghastly sight of a crewman. He was gesturing with a malformed hand for her to follow him into another line, and as she took a hesitant step towards him, she turned to thank the man who had gotten her attention. When she looked however, he was gone.

She walked silently behind the crewman, still shocked at his appearance. She had expected clean-cut sailors--with their inverted creases and meticulously shined shoes. She had expected tan, young faces with sun-bleached hair and the slightest hint of stubble. Looking at the man limping in front of her, with his rag-patched pants and matted gray hair, she realized that she was sorely mistaken.

The girl dutifully followed the crewman, and by his instructions she allowed herself to be sorted--to be classified and qualified and observed. She didn't know what they were looking for and was unsure of how to act. She faked a smile and ran through the manners that had been drilled into her since grade school. But even as she forced politeness, she doubted that her "please" and "thank yous" would even make a difference.

Even though the system moved like clockwork, she couldn't help but notice how arbitrary the sorting was. Girls stood next to boys in no particular order. Moral character seemed to matter none. Musicians stood by athletes, tall next to short, quiet next inexpressibly obnoxious. There were no patterns, yet the crew deftly sorted and resorted into specific and more specific groups. And as she allowed herself to be grouped and

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regrouped, the girl was nagged by the feeling of being out of place. No matter who she was standing next to, she could only think *wrong. this is wrong. i'm not supposed to be here.* She looked around herself and felt that they were making a mistake--that they were putting her in the wrong place, but there wasn't anyone to explain this to.

She ultimately gave in. She was tired and overwhelmed and wanted desperately for the day to be over. She adopted the subdued expression that masked the many faces around her, and even though the nagging feeling never quite disappeared, she succeeded in suppressing it. She succeeded in pretending like it wasn't there.

After some time, the afternoon sun leaned on the dark blue shelf of sea, and seeing this, the young passengers became suddenly aware of their own tiredness. Conscious of themselves for the first time in hours, they realized that they were at sea, and had been at sea for some time. They convinced themselves that there had been no time to lean over the edge of the ship to wave goodbye to their crying mothers. There had been no time to watch their past fade into the distance--to watch the land become nothing more than a tiny speck on the horizon.

As though they sensed this change, the crew began leading the lined-up passengers below the deck to their quarters. Somewhere, the girl was watching an orderly line being led into a warmly lit hatch, and as she glimpsed at the comfortably furnished cabin, envy and tiredness clenched her throat. She fiercely fought the thought of tears. She followed in single file through the hallways and down the endless flights of stairs. The deeper into the ship they got, the narrower the halls became and the lower the ceiling sank. The polished hardwood of the upper decks shamed the splintering and moldy floors of the lower decks, and by time they came to a halt, their feet were sinking into the wood beneath them.

Days passed--or weeks--time was impossible to keep track of. They couldn't remember the last meal they had or the effect of natural light on their faces. The dark space was filled with the dank smell of a mold that was cut with the sharp odor of confined and ailing bodies.

Through the thick blackness of the cabin, beyond the sprawled-out and dehydrated bodies, the girl was sitting by the wall of the ship. Even in the dark, it was clear that she had changed. She had witnessed what I was like to suffer--to flounder, to fail, to lose sight of lifelong dreams--but she never let go of the idea that she belonged somewhere else--somewhere better. She saw herself in another life, walking through the comfortably lit cabins higher up in the ship, and imagined that the footsteps creaking across the floorboards above her were her own.

The sloshing of the water against the ship was hypnotic, and the girl was drifting in and out of sleep when there was a thud directly above her. The sound and its closeness made the girl shrink down towards the floor. She looked up at the ceiling. It was low enough to touch while sitting. From where she sat, she could stretch her arm up and finger the edge where the wall met the low ceiling, and it was while she unconsciously picked at the wood that she noticed something.

She rocked onto her knees and pressed her face closer to the seam of the two pieces of wood. Inch-ing closer, she thought she was a tiny glimmer of light. Sweat began to bend on her neck and forehead as her face flushed hot and red. She stopped moving and held her breath, trying to gauge what was happening in the cabin above her. Nothing.

She looked back at the line above her, where the two surfaces met, and couldn't decide if she had finally become delusional. She again reached her heavy arm up to touch the place she thought the light was coming from. The wood was soft, and with only a little pressure, a small chunk broke easily into her hand.

"What's that?" She jumped up at the voice behind her and slammed her hand into the spot she'd been looking at. She stumbled forward and dropped the piece of wood as she reached her hand up to trace her throbbing scalp. She could already feel the blood rushing to form a firm lump.

"Sorry, I didn't mean too--"

"How long were you there?" the words fell awkwardly from her mouth. She realized she hadn't spoken since she said goodbye to her mother.

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"I don't know, I..." it was a male voice, parched, and deeper because of it.

She rubbed the top of her head, trying to remember what she had been doing. She looked up at the same time that he did.

"Is that a light?" and since his words confirmed that some part of her was still sane, everything before them was forgiven.

And so for days after, the two of them sat at that spot, taking turns scraping at the wood above them, becoming more and more intent of rising out of that dark space. They worked mostly by nightfall--when the light above was at its weakest, and the passengers were asleep--quietly picking their way towards hopefulness. There were parts that fell away easily, parts that were waterlogged and soft, but the larger sections were dry and splintered. The jagged pieces sometimes dug inches into their soft palms. They took turns to relieve each other, but by the end of the second day, their hands were already bloodied and raw from clawing at the bare wood.

Soon the light was strong enough to crawl into the darkest corners of the room and rouse a few passengers from sleep. A small group began to form; they would gather a few feet away from the boy and the girl, and watch the slow progress wordlessly, captivated by the effort of the two. During the day, the others watched enviously as the pair basked in their little ray of light.

As the hole grew, so did the girl's hope for freedom. She would share these thoughts with the boy, and he would share his own, and soon they were spilling secrets all over the soggy floor beneath them.

There was more to be said in their silences than when they were actually speaking.

She was so torn because though she hated the place they were in, it was that very place that brought him to her. And though she couldn't remember what it had been like before and didn't know what it would be like after, she was thankful to have someone like him beside her while she fought to leave that place.

They found that the ceiling was several layers thick, and after weeks of hard work, all that was left was the topmost layer. One night they went to work even though the wood was much harder, and as they pulled pieces down, they glimpsed the waxy finish on the other side. Soon there was a hole large enough to fit a head through, and as they slowly widened it, they could see the pick rays of dawn filling in cabin.

"You should go" the boy's voice rose above a whisper.

"What? No!" she looked at him, startled, "No."

"You can fit. You can get through."

She was afraid to ask what he was planning for himself.

"Please go. I'll be right behind you." And before she could protest, he pushed her up through the hole.

As soon as she was through, she turned and stared, tearing at the wood, but her hands were too sore, and her legs were too weak to hold, to be effective.

"What're you doing? I'll get this, please, you have to leave." He was below her, fighting hard to keep his voice down. His eyes pleaded.

She stood slowly and rubbed her eyes with the back of her hand. She felt sobs building up inside her chest, but she turned away, despite the ache in her throat. Every thought vanished from her mind when she turned to see a particularly disgusting crewman standing behind her.

"What's this?" he grunted, spreading his mouth into a gaping, toothless grin. He grabbed her by her thin arm and began to drag her from the room. Her body was too exhausted to fight back and it quickly fell limp. She was tired of struggling--tired of running from her fate.

Her hands were tired and her eyes blindfolded, but as they pulled her onto the top deck of the ship, they couldn't keep the wind from brushing against her skin. By late morning the sun was boring down from high above her. She didn't flinch when she felt the rough hands of a sailor against her skin. She was forced to stand, and when the blindfold was ripped off of her, it was revealed a ten-foot plank hanging over the side of the ship. She swayed for a moment--the plank seemed to stretch farther out into the choppy mass of

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blue--but she quickly composed herself. She concentrated on the steady crash of the chopping waves.

Every passenger aboard the ship was spread out onto the deck, much like they had been on the first day, except self-divided. There was utter silence among the mass of people. She felt something sharp jab into her back and she stumbled forward a few paces away from the jeering crew.

The girl's eyes searched the crowd anxiously, and they finally settled on the boy. Everything around her dissolved when she saw him standing there, in the open air with a grin on his face. She faced the wind, and in the distance, she noticed for the first time, a green peak of land. With the destination so close, she remembered why she boarded the ship. She started towards the end of the plank because suddenly--suddenly, everything was clear. Without hesitation, she lifted her foot and leaned forward off the wood. Her body tilted and arched away from the security of the boat, face first, towards the menacing sea. It was impossible for her to anticipate what the water below held for her, but as she drew nearer to it, she felt as though it radiated heat. A pleasant warmth, like the eye-closing comfort of the summer sun, overcame her.

Her heart raced for a second. The moment before she hit the water, she felt a pang of regret; she felt that maybe--just maybe--she had made a mistake. As soon as the thought was there, however, it was gone again. Just as her nose reached the surface, but before her ears were submerged, she heard a great cheer above her and instantly knew: he had jumped too. And more importantly, he had jumped after her.

- Michelle Paige, Class I





Familiar

I am the seed
in the core of a shiny red apple
that fell not far,
but not distant
from the family tree
that's roots are bound to African soil
inextricably
that's leaves float on European waters
aimlessly
with branches reaching in desperation over
oceans, farms and state lines
to shade the cracked American concrete
in the backyard of my home,
bittersweet, home

- Ashley Miranda, I



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6:37 pm

a haiku

Speckles of light dance,
Tinted green, tinted yellow,
Illuminating.

I want to hold them
Feel them, eat them, love them all,
These blobs of pure joy.

They light up my day
they darken my way, to where
I dream of going.

Speckles of light die,
Tinted green, tinted yellow,
Dull, faded, gone, dead.

- Michaela Hughes, III

The sky is a flawless light blue. The big old oak trees lining the streets are beginning to bud , small specks of green barely visible as my dad weaves through the traffic, racing against the clock to get me to school on time. My eyes, barely open, squint against the glaring rising sun straight ahead. Suddenly, out of the corner of my eye, I catch a glimpse of a huge mass of frizzy black hair and in the adjacent lane, in a small blue car full of children, I spot one upturned face, pressed against the window, shining eyes staring mesmerized at the sky, lips slightly apart as if in awe, and ears covered with headphones. That one girl seems oblivious to all the people in the car and all the traffic in the street as she stares up into the endless blue. Frantically, I waved at her, and slowly coming to reality, that girl, my friend, SY, lowers her eyes back to Earth and smiles back, waves slowly, and after a brief interval as traffic cut between us, the next time i glimpse her, she is once again staring at the sky.

While walking in the prison-like brick school building, covered with old opaque dirty windows, I stare up at the sky and wonder what SY could have been thinking while looking up. I take a deep breath and can barely catch the cool clean whiff of Spring, nearly overpowered by the smells of fast food coming from a nearby building, and the sickening familiar gasoline fumes of the city. I nearly lose myself myself while staring into the deep blue, swimming in that endless beauty. I feel like if I reach just a little farther I can touch and grab it. he heavy et uniform double doors suddenly come into view and sighing, I grab a hold of the cold handle and shove the door open and walk into the dreary darkly lit building.

While sitting in homeroom, I absentmindedly roll about my spinning chair, barely aware of my teacher taking attendance or my friend, Ika, trying to study Latin while laughing at my spinning. I started laughing remembering my Sixie year at this prison-yard .In English class, our young teacher had a good-heartedly bought us to the computer lab in the basement so that we could use the internet to help us study for our finals. Having finished reading all the reviews of the books or perhaps just being bored and not caring, a swarm of students in the back of the room. This was one of my first impressions of SY as she ecstatically raced through the computer lab.

The memory of chair racing automatically brings up all the other memorable moments SY had created in my “Cluster D” sixie year classes. Back in the day, SY was a short spunky girl with quite a character which most of the teachers dubbed rude. SY was always breaking one school rule or another. In classrooms marked: “NO GUM, NO FOOD, NO DRINKS,” her jaw was constantly rebelliously working on a piece of gum, or as she explained it- “a chewy cough drop,” and she was frequently drinking coffee in plain view. She was full of smart remarks and insane ideas to drive more of the unfortunate, inexperienced new teachers crazy. Among the crazy things she did were crawling out the window to “chase her money” and drinking “grape juice”. However, despite her antics, it was obvious that this girl was smart as a whip. One of the only teachers who could handle her, Ms. I., once made the prophetic statement that SY “is a great scholar.” Through the years, SY has tamed her rebellious attitude, but is till know for her occasional outbursts and her hilarious remarks. One thing that has remained the same is her status of “savior of the students” saying and doing the things no one else has the courage to do.

The homeroom bell suddenly rings and I trudge to my first class of the day, Math. After handing in my homework and saluting my teacher with the mandatory greeting of “Good morning, Mr. V.,” I walked back to my chair in the back corner of the room and slouch down, wearily waiting for math class to begin and be over with. While taking notes in class, my mind again wanders and I watch kids in various degrees of awakening and SY undoubtedly doing math homework in front of me. I quietly smile as I remember a time this year when everyone was in full concentration taking a test. She suddenly realized one of the pages was double-sided and yelled out obscenities without realizing it. When she saw everyone looking at her, she asked “what?” not realizing she had said her thoughts out loud, and everyone subsequently burst out laughing, the test mood lightening briefly.

After math class, I wander through more classes until lunch time. I hurriedly go to the guidance office where sure enough, I see SY perched up on a wall expectantly waiting for me. Together, we go through

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fice where sure enough, I see SY perched up on a wall expectantly waiting for me. Together, we go through our daily ritual of reading the random quote posted in the hallway and then the gossip begins. Unlike normal teenagers, we do not talk about student relationships, but rather about two of our teachers --- the dynamic duo, Mr. N. and Ms. T. Mr. N. is our history teacher and unlike the stereotypical half-asleep chubby old man who goes on and on talking about random things, Mr. N. is like a student, endowed with all the knowledge one could ever wish for, understanding what it takes to teach students locked up in a bored, monotonous school. In short, he is amazing, however, I digress. He is another essay, another story. Ms. T. is our Latin teacher, who, much like Mr. N., remembers what it was like being a kid and makes a subject that can be the greatest lullaby (an allusion to sleep), into a challenging, fun-filled class. While we talk about these two great teachers, SY is absolutely bubbling with excitement. Coming up with fantastical stories about the two teachers in their real lives outside of school, SY's imagination is on the loose and before we know it, lunch is over.

After school, I meet up with SY and after conversing for awhile with Mr. Z. and borrowing some new books from him, we walk together to take the train. On the way home, we continue our lunch conversation, obsessing over some new antic Mr. N. pulled in class or moaning and groaning over some other school subject. Other passengers on the train stare as we obsess over our teachers and classes, especially with SY's loud voice filling in the otherwise silent orange line.

When we get to Forest Hills, we go our separate ways. Instead of looking up at the sky, SY walks toward her bus stop with her face stuck in yet another boring history book. However, just observing her face, you would never guess that the book was boring. One time, I left her while she was sitting in the sunlight reading. When I got on the bus, I tried to wave good-bye to her, and saw her smiling to herself reading a book from Mr. N. with teachers' essays about being teachers (which is about as boring as a book can get in my personal opinion). Her tiny figure was bent over the book and she seemed completely isolated and out of place with crazy city drivers racing through the yellow lights in the background while she read. I thought to myself as I watched her absorb that book, her mind probably taking in all the facts like a sponge. Ms. I. was right indeed; there is a scholar underneath that carefree attitude.

- Anonymous

YOUR NAME



Your name has been engraved into the very depths of my brain
written in permanent marker
And no matter how hard I try
I can't erase it.

Your name has become a song in my head
that plays on repeat all day long
And no matter how hard I try
I can't find another song to replace it.

But
If I could
I would paint your name on all the sidewalks in town
I would string it up on the trees and buildings with white and neon Christmas lights
So that when it grew dark
Your name would flash brightly all across the sky
And into your window.

- Adriana Lasso-Harrier, IV

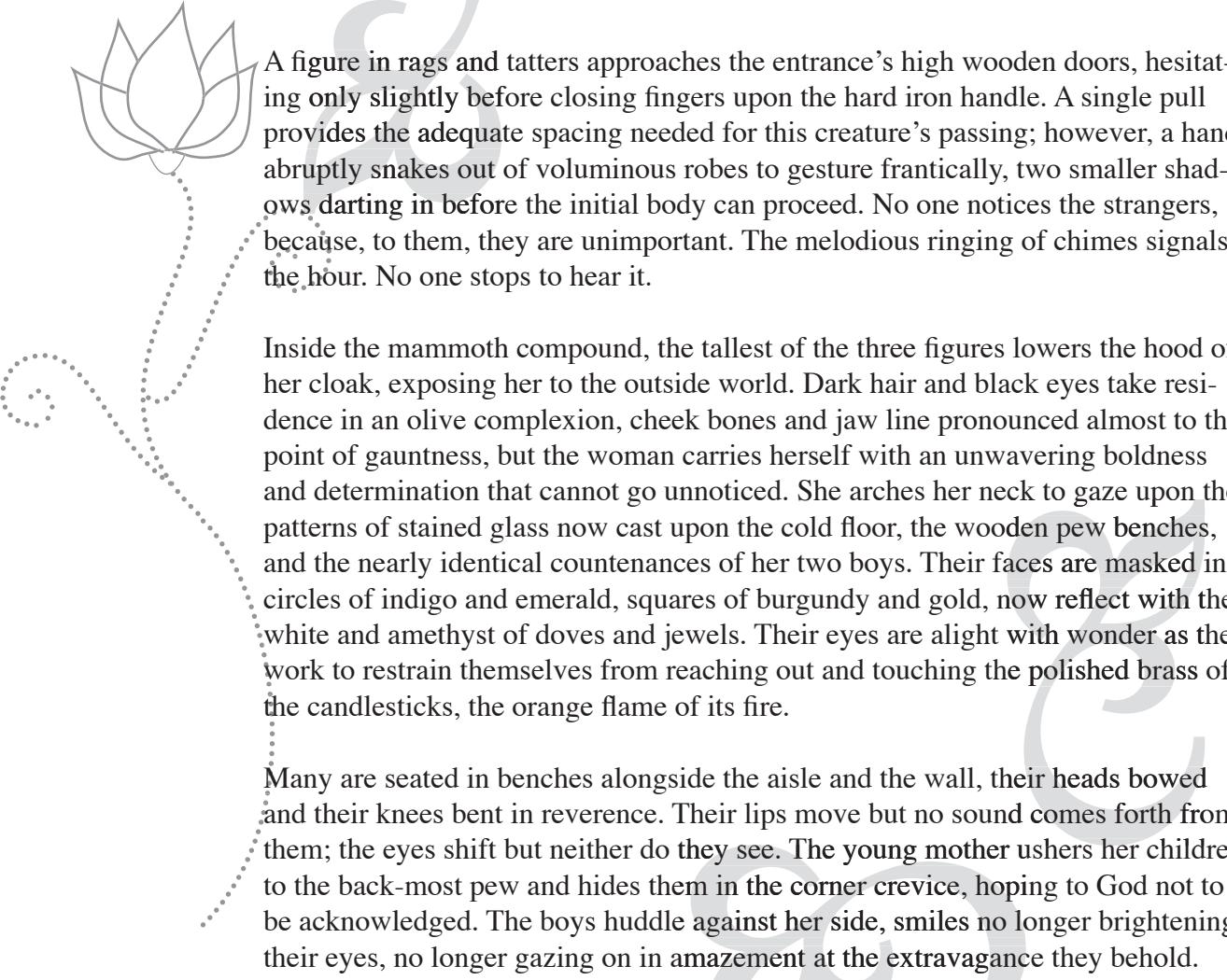


The Presence of Something Special

Inspired by:

Claude Monet's Rouen Cathedral, West Façade

Periwinkle and roan splotches of color paint the dark bell tower ledges, rays of the early morning light seeping through the clouds and onto the dull stone of the cathedral walls. Its vast structure does not appear ominous at this time of morning and does not intimidate those seeking its supposed comfort and sanctuary. In this light, the church does not represent the daunting power it holds, only the protection it can offer, the safety it harbors amid its pillars and statues of archangels and seraphim. Some kind of higher power watches over this place; it is a truth many know but do not believe.



A figure in rags and tatters approaches the entrance's high wooden doors, hesitating only slightly before closing fingers upon the hard iron handle. A single pull provides the adequate spacing needed for this creature's passing; however, a hand abruptly snakes out of voluminous robes to gesture frantically, two smaller shadows darting in before the initial body can proceed. No one notices the strangers, because, to them, they are unimportant. The melodious ringing of chimes signals the hour. No one stops to hear it.

Inside the mammoth compound, the tallest of the three figures lowers the hood of her cloak, exposing her to the outside world. Dark hair and black eyes take residence in an olive complexion, cheek bones and jaw line pronounced almost to the point of gauntness, but the woman carries herself with an unwavering boldness and determination that cannot go unnoticed. She arches her neck to gaze upon the patterns of stained glass now cast upon the cold floor, the wooden pew benches, and the nearly identical countenances of her two boys. Their faces are masked in circles of indigo and emerald, squares of burgundy and gold, now reflect with the white and amethyst of doves and jewels. Their eyes are alight with wonder as they work to restrain themselves from reaching out and touching the polished brass of the candlesticks, the orange flame of its fire.

Many are seated in benches alongside the aisle and the wall, their heads bowed and their knees bent in reverence. Their lips move but no sound comes forth from them; the eyes shift but neither do they see. The young mother ushers her children to the back-most pew and hides them in the corner crevice, hoping to God not to be acknowledged. The boys huddle against her side, smiles no longer brightening their eyes, no longer gazing on in amazement at the extravagance they behold. The woman's eyes too are downcast as she clutches their shoulders, glancing around beneath her lids to the newcomers sliding into pews and ignoring her as if she weren't standing there.

And that is fine with her. Not being seen is both a blessing and a curse. Not everyone feels the steel of its double-edged blade.

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A commotion is heard in the cobblestone streets outside, but no one in the cathedral pays the ruckus any unnecessary heed. At the moment, it does not concern them. At the moment, the only matter that calls for their attention is the ongoing prayer for the conservation of their immortal souls.

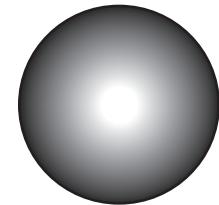
Nothing moves in the sacred house until the next bell tolls. Its musical sound brings those on their knees back to the physical world, blinking and nodding and waving in greeting as they recognize someone they know. The strangers keep as still as the stone on which they lean until the last of the devout step away and into the sunlight. The great doors open, letting the sun penetrate the dusky gloom of incense and candle smoke. For a moment, the beams blind her, so used were her eyes to the dim and the darkness, though the instant soon passes. The boys rub their eyes with the dark of their dirty palms, smudging the pattern of soot that had so long ago settled on their skin. They each earn an affectionate pat on the head, a ruffle of the hair. They grin as only little boys can, linking hands while still keeping a hold onto their mother. They are not yet confident nor foolish enough to wander too far from familiarity just yet.

She waits for the bells to toll many times more before shifting to a sitting position and taking from her robe a loaf of bread. She divides the loaf into uneven thirds and distributes it to those who someday will learn not to rely on her so heavily. But for now let them lean, she says to herself. Self-dependence will come in time. Hopefully, not too quickly.

The silhouettes of the angel-statues later begin to shift their shadows as the sun starts its descent. The mother inches toward the door as the last daylight chimes are rung. The cover of night is something she cannot afford to miss. Streetlamps are lit, doors are shut and barred, small stars wink in and out in multiple patterns of mischievous blinks. As the three slip from the church, she feels a presence she had not felt before close around her body. *So maybe there is a God*, she muses. And they disappear again.

— Patricia Cahill, III

The Law of Falling Objects



I. The Dark Side of the Moon

The old villa creaked slowly, hauntingly, as the heavy winds ravaged the open fields. A man is visible a ways outside of this villa. This man, a soon-to-be father known to most as Vincenzo is pacing the length of the walk, dreading the return home. As the daylight begins to fade, he wraps his cloak tighter around his form and shuts the door behind him.

It was on this stormy night in 1564, the 15th of February that I was born.

And now, because I am at the end, facing the end; I choose now, to turn back to the beginning. My early years are blurred in my memory. Few glimmerings stand out. I was so young and full of every stupid fancy that fills us all in childhood. I believed I was destined to change the world. My greatest fear was to be forgotten. And although I planned to have the world at my fingertips- there was so much I never learned, so much I've never seen, never felt, never knew. I've never seen the ocean before. That I remember quite well.

I was the first of six. We were poor. My father played music. The rest is a vague, bittersweet haze of incorrigible curiosity. In the spring of 1581, I began my studies at the university in Pisa where my family hoped I would study medicine. I studied physics and the works of men far greater than my time. My first truest memory was of a lamp. I watched, transfixed as it swung. Propelled by a force of nature, it swung unceasingly; swung back and forth. I've never seen the ocean. But I imagine waves must possess the same motion. Back and forth, back and forth, propelled by some invisible force. How far does a pendulum swing? How far does an ocean spread? Does the pendulum speed up or slow down? Do the waves in the ocean ever change? All my life I have always been taught math and science and medicine and the supposed important things in life. But what about motion? What about the stars? The sun? The moon? What about the places I've never been? The oceans I've never seen? There is an entire universe filled with things that are every bit as important as math, science, and medicine. What about the dark side of the moon; the dark side that no one has ever seen? Is it as smooth and perfect as I dreamed? Are the stars, the moons, the planets - celestial spheres whose surface is marred by naught in its take on perfection? Is anything as they say? I've never seen the ocean. I've never seen the moon. I could fill planets full of the things that I know nothing about. I realized then, that changing the world is impossible. It was all I could do to not let it change me. I'm a selfish person by nature. I want, more than anything else, to know the truth. I want to know all there is to know about the things just as important as math, science, and medicine. Not for the sake of religion, not for the sake of medicine, not for the sake of saving lives and reaching glory; just for me, for my sake.

II. The Inquisition

I used to be afraid that after I was gone no one would remember me. My name would fade into the backdrop, my works, my achievements; all that I have worked for would mean nothing as the days go by. I would be forgotten by the generations and my value as a person would deteriorate with time. I wanted to be remembered as an un-expendable force, without whom the world would have lost so much. But now, my life is over. I am truly facing the end. Tomorrow, they will convene for my trial. And they will demand an answer. Did I have enough conviction in my beliefs to throw away my life for the truth? Ahead of me the pendulum swings. I am asked to choose between living and the things that make my life worth living. Back and forth. In the end...in the end, I am nothing but a fool. An old fool. A fool who believed he could change the world with a few clumsy concepts of truth. Back and forth. A broken fool, who would rather waste his life, be locked away than face the inevitable end. And I'm so scared. So terrified of what lies ahead. But I know now that the right thing, the wrong thing, the best thing, the worst thing...all of it means nothing. For once, I do not want to be remembered. I do not want the world to remember just how weak and expendable I really am. My last wish, my dying wish is that when I go, the world can look the other way. And then, maybe, years later, someone who did not know me, a stranger, could look at the things I believed in and see what I am worth. And though I am a selfish person by

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nature. I hope that one day it won't matter how selfish I am or how weak I've become. Because I am scared. So terrified of the unknown. I don't even have the ability to believe in myself. My life will end as it began, in the windy, cold settings of oblivion. My last wish, my dying wish is that when I go, the world can look the other way.

Because I am a weak, selfish old fool. *And that is how I should be remembered.*

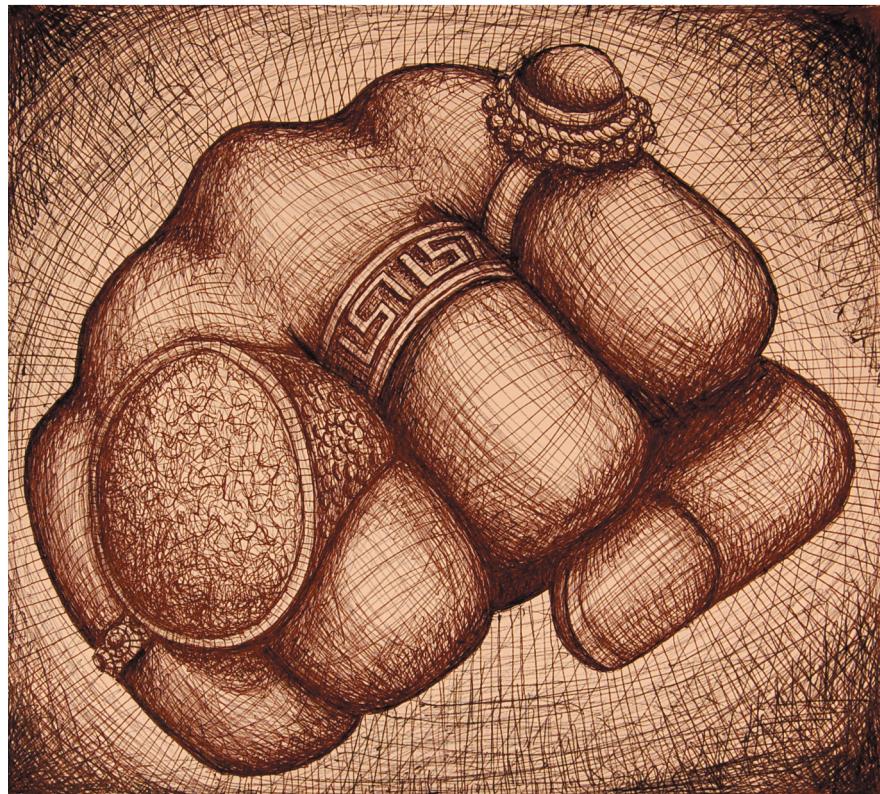
III. The Remains

In the summer of 1992, after a long, meeting spanning from the early morning to the late night, Galileo Galilei was finally cleared of treason to the church. Years, decades, centuries before, this might have made a difference. He is remembered today as a scientist and a scholar who radically changed the world with his beliefs. We remember him at his best. We remember what he believed. He believed in the rough surface of the moon, the steady swing of the pendulum; he believed in the oceans he's never seen and the things he'd never known and though he choose to recant, though he choose to live, we are all strangers now and perhaps somehow, someone will recognize the value in his words and look upon his memory fondly.

Galileo Galilei went silently, without a trace. His dying wish. But he will be remembered as one of the most enlightened men of his time. There are even, on occasion

...flowers on his grave.

- Lisa Wang, III





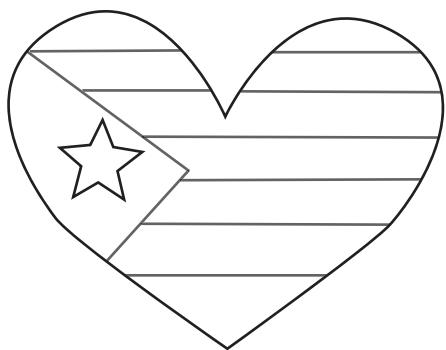
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• • • • • • • Silent Week • • • • •

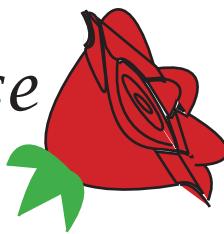
Warm blood running down his hands
Of a lost soul and a young heart
My aunt's husband was snuffed by a hand-made object of death
His heart stops another crime, another homicide
It tears my aunt up inside up to this day
And I burned with rage knowing
That my aunt's husband wouldn't be seen again.
The anger running through my veins
Like lava erupting from a volcano.
Night of depression was bleak
Like a future with no sun.
My pregnant aunt gave birth to a baby boy
With no father and his first word learned being "Daddy, Daddy"
Knowing his father wasn't there,
But still a deep part of his heart and soul.
Once again in the dark alley memories aching in my mind
Murderer never being found and the reason never known
His young cousin slowly watching
His strong Puerto Rican heart give up inside.
For four years a piece of my soul has been dug up,
Lost beneath the land of the dead.
But he's been a part of my shadow and a part of my life
When he was alive and since he has been gone
Silenced by the burial,
Tears were being dropped like rain drops from a dark, cloudy sky
Trying to hold my tears in
One drop of crystal clear sorrow fell from eyes
Silent week, seven days without any sleep
Silence, Silence, Silence

R.I.P. Galdy Perez
1978-2002

- Crystal Ramirez, IV

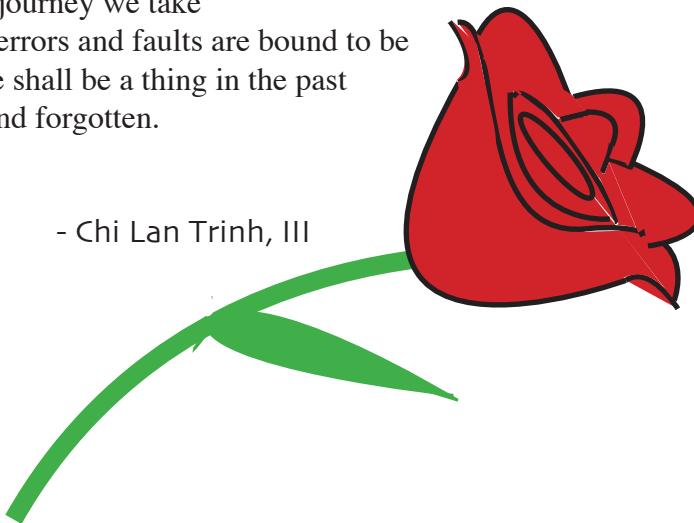


Like a Rose



A symbol of love
A symbol of romance
A symbol of hearts filled with passion
Lie with the lightness of breath
Upon the path which I tread by her glory
And neglected by her wrath
In truth it was a beautiful rose
Of rare breed and fair complexion
Pale skin hidden beneath flushed cheeks
Veiled by my shadow
Unseen and forgotten
Lies another, misshapen and plain
And I denied the temptation to shed a tear
For in rebirth it shall be
Unsurpassable in beauty
By any other than itself
As is the journey we take
Wherein errors and faults are bound to be
With time shall be a thing in the past
Unseen and forgotten.

- Chi Lan Trinh, III



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Untitled

They always asked him who he was to tread so far off the beaten path when he appeared in their little villages. He always shrugged and had no answer.

Their accusing eyes always followed him. *Who? Who are you?*

Sometimes he thought about what to say to them, when there was nothing left to do. "No one." "Everyone." "I don't really know." "Does it really matter?" But it always ended the same way, with a shrug for an answer.

They didn't trust him after that. No one trusted one without a name. Humans were stupid that way.

Who are you?

Of course, it wasn't just his lack of a name. They distrusted him, dressed in black cloth under the hot sun, when black was only for mourning and the dead. They distrusted him with nothing but the clothes on his back. How, they asked, could someone walk to their village? Were his bandit friends waiting for the signal? Was he fleeing calamity that could be brought to their doors? Was he a demon?

The last question always made him smile. It was probably the closest they would ever get.

Eventually, he began to forget which villages, which towns he had come to. They began to blur together, until he was no longer sure if he had walked the same dust-etched footsteps long before or had been only to an echo of the same town. It did not matter to him. They never realized. He was always the same, even if they were always different.

Eventually, the people began to blur together as well. The priestess with the dreadful scars and the heart of gold, the harpist with the warm smile, the little boy who had showed him how to use a slingshot. The woodcutter who had offered him a drink, the blind girl clutching a ragged doll tight, the old woman with the sad eyes.

And always, he walked on, unheeding of the call of time.

Who are you?

And always, he didn't know.

- Roseanne Feng, Class V



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Response to The Awakening

The sea, she breathes,
in and out,
in and out.

Past the coral reefs,
in the great blue deep
she slumbers.

Slumber still?

the lightest sleep.

Betwixt wake and languor,
Skimming past the sapphire veil,
under the gentlest ripple's swell,

She lingers.

Tainted passions
fleeting dream of
heart's first kiss.

Mortal coil
that chafes and stings,
viscous veil that bind the senses,

all washed away clean.
And as lightest foam she shall arise,
exultation swift as tide,
she shall glide away.

Free.



- Herrissa Lamothe, I





Rumpelstiltskin



Words work like twine
Sun around the spindle of
My mind
And time doesn't exist
As I search for the right word
To describe every indent and curve
Of your lips
Every firm sensation
Of my fingertips gliding over
Every muscle on your arms
Every shade of mahogany
And chestnut-caramel-chocolate that
Coats your supple vessel
Every shockwave of ecstasy
That trickles down my body
When you run your finger
Jointed, smooth, and firm
Along my jaw line

Bent over a note book
With a broken bird
Filing page after page
With rhythm after rhyme
But each eloquent and decadent
Description of your curls
Or profound proverb that
Described your affect on my world
Is not enough because,
Inevitably,
My word remains wordless
I remain worthless
Covered in the tapestry I've woven
With my endless affections

- Dianna C. Willard, II

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Dance With The Ocean

In the world of fate, i walk on a beach barefoot on the sands of time. The waves ferociously crash but there is no sound.

Ineffable.

The beach is a circle, with a circumference of time and in the center is an ocean, rages with whirlpools of love. I wander aimlessly, foolishly looking for a flower.

Failure.

Every flower is either eaten or poisonous so with time beneath my soles, i balance myself with the whirling waters and the lifeless beach. Suffering nostalgia, I seek my salvation by walking, in search of peaceful shell. The stars twinkle and so do my eye as a sparkling spiral shell catches my lonely imagination. I lay my soft hands on it and dust the sands off its diaphanous surface under the moonlight. I whisper to the shell, "I miss the sounds of the waves. Please allow me one last dance to the music of the ocean." I hold it to my ear. The motionless shell gives me nothing.

Eternal silence.

The moon fades but the stars continuously twinkle as I patiently wait, holding on to this beautiful shell. The soundless waves continue to crash and the boundless sands continue to twirl. Again I whisper to the shell, "One last dance to the music of the ocean." I hold it to my ear and Splash.

That's all... splash. Not the thunderous roars of the ocean, but splash.

Staring at it with mixed emotions of disappointment and celebration, i want to put it away in my large pocket of despair but it is peppered with holes of hope. Unwillingly, I release the shell from my grip and gently put it down.

Detachment.

No, more like solidarity. I laugh a little but thinking about the little bits of love I ever gave.

I will never forget my last chance. Splash.

I walk away with a smile big as the shining sun's arc as it rises. Hoping that fate would one day break this endless circle, i let the sands carry me into the solitude.

- Tu Phan, I



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